

THE EXAMINER.

"PROVE ALL THINGS; HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

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PAUL SEYMOUR,

PUBLISHER.

From the Louisville Democrat.

The Emancipation Movement Once More.

Gentlemen: My absence from home, and

particular engagements both before and

since, have detained me thus long from

your columns. Perhaps I should neither

regret the circumstance, nor offer an apolo-

gy for it; for it has been intimated to me

and I confess that I have received the slight-

est possible impression to the same effect,

that I was drawing a little too free upon

your politeness in continuing this discussion

so long. I observed that my last communi-

cation did not appear in your daily sheet

two weeks after I had handed it to you,

and more recently I noticed your com-

plaint against the editors of the Examiner,

in which you say—"Mr. Breckinridge's ar-

ticles are paraded in the Examiner, headed

'From the Louisville Democrat,' but our

replies do not appear. We give both sides,

they only their own. They may indeed re-

ply that they did not consider our remarks

worth publishing. We could return the

compliment as to articles on emancipation

generally. We don't consider them worth

the space they occupy; but we have allow-

ed the emancipationists the benefit of their

own appreciation of their articles, and pub-

lished them for what they are worth. We

should print very little from our opponents,

if we had first to determine that it was

worth printing."

I confess, gentlemen, that when I read

these lines, and found myself unable to re-

call anything in your paper on the emanci-

pation side, since this question was stirred

up by your pen, it began to look very

much as if I had worn my welcome

out. But, the privilege of writing in such

a paper as yours being altogether too great

to be given up lightly, I turned back to the

beginning of the piece and read over again,

what you had said about me and my writ-

ings there—so complimentary that modesty

forbids me to repeat it—and then I consid-

ered that you surely will not hold me ac-

countable for the conduct of the Examiner,

and then I concluded that you did not mean

anything. But, gentlemen, if you are really

getting tired of this discussion, please

say so in the vernacular, and I will quietly

retire—like one John Brown of whom I

used to hear when I was a boy, who, being

ordered out of doors, significantly remark-

ed, that he could take a hint as well as

anybody.

In my last communication, I endeavored

to illustrate the tendency and influence of

slavery in retarding the population of a

country. You seem to consider my picture

overdrawn, but I do not understand you as

denying its substantial accuracy. Indeed

you could not deny it—so numerous and

so striking are the facts which establish it.

I was curious to see how you would meet

the argument derived from it. I knew very

well, as I intimated, that the common an-

swer has become a denial of the benefits of

a large population; but I had hoped to hear

from gentlemen like yourselves something

more to the point. Sirs, do you think that

there are people enough in Kentucky, or

that it would be to our disadvantage to ad-

vance more rapidly than we are doing in

low population? Would you like to see

Louisville as large as Cincinnati, and

Kentucky as populous as Ohio? Or have

you rather Daniel Boone's view of the sub-

ject, of whom it is related, that as the set-

tlements advanced upon him, he would com-

plain of the scarcity of game, the annoy-

ance of neighbors, and other evils of a

large population? You are pleased to pass

these matters all by without remark. It

seems to me they are well worthy of your

attention in this discussion. You have not

denied, I presume you acknowledge, that

ment derived from it. What use is there in

blinding our minds to the truth, like the

child that shuts his eyes or covers up his

head in the thunder storm?

You have thought proper to pass by alto-

gether what I have urged touching the ef-

fect of slavery upon the political strength and

influence of the State. Is our relative pow-

er in this confederacy a question of no mo-

ment? The presence of our slaves dimin-

ishes our representation, and thus our power

and influence in the government. And this

limitation is twofold, or by a double pro-

cess. For, if we had never had any slaves

we would now have more white people than

we in fact have; and then our slaves are

not represented in the same ratio with white

people, and thus our share in the govern-

ment is cut down by our negroes both ways.

I suggested before, that those who desire

more people, do not care for any greater

power in the government of the country.—

Good easy souls!

There is another aspect of this subject

far more important than any which we have

yet considered. This is what I will call

the moral view of slavery. There are var-

ious lights in which this part of the sub-

ject may be contemplated. It will be enough

for me to suggest some of them at this time.

Should this discussion be continued, they

may be examined more at length hereafter.

And now, gentlemen, to begin at the be-

ginning, is slavery right? I do not wish to

go into any hair-splitting metaphysical

questions. You know that I am a very

plain man. I take you to be plain men.

I suppose that those whom I address through-

out—the great body of the people who read

what I write, whether in your paper, or

others into which it may be copied—are

also plain common-sense people, who take

straight-forward views of things. Now I

ask, is slavery right—as a thing between

man and man, in their private relations—or

as a public institution? It began in this

country with the slave trade. I need hardly

ask you whether that was right; for, I be-

lieve, nearly every civilized nation has de-

clared it piracy, and punishes it with death.

But slavery here among us in Kentucky—

does the common sense, does the sincere

feeling of the people say, the thing is right?

It was born and brought up, and have lived

nearly all my life in Kentucky, among slaves

and their masters; and my clear and deep

conviction is, that the great body of them

all are of one opinion on this subject—to

wit, that the system is wrong. And for

myself, I am just as clear, that herein they

are right. I do not say, nor do they, that

holding slaves is a thing of itself, necessari-

ly sinful, simply a violation of the divine

law. No good man who took that view

could continue to hold slaves. But they

say, and so do I, and I think you will too,

that the institution of slavery is founded on

bad principles, and brings out injurious

effects. It exists among us in its least of-

fensive form; but what does it imply here?

It strips the slave, not during his childhood,

or for his crimes, but without offence on

his part, and during his whole life, of all

power over himself. His right to the avails

of his labor, his command of his time, his

control of his children, his living with his

wife, nay, his having any wife, these

things are all denied him as of right. If

he enjoys any of them, it is at the pleas-

ure of his master. The system reduces him

to the level of property—may there be less

of dignity and permanency in the tenure by

which he is held as property, than the earth

he treads on—for he is but a chattel. He

has not even left to him the right to acquire

knowledge, so that he may know how to

live and how to die. His soul itself is well

nigh at the mercy of his master. That this

power is generally used humanely, and

sometimes with more regard to the welfare

of the slave than to the profit of the master,

no man acquainted with the state of society

in Kentucky can deny. But is it not an

at home, and that is not known abroad.

But suppose the instances of theft and other

crimes, of which the law takes cognizance

among the "white slaves" you spoke of in

the free States, were hunted out among our

slaves in Kentucky, and publicly punished,

now do you think our black slaves would

compare, as to their morals, with your white

ones? And then their religious instruction.

There are numerous and extreme difficulties

about it, of which those who are not con-

versant with the matter, know little; but

which are sufficient to show that slavery

is a miserable system in its moral rela-

tions and influence.

I might draw a picture of the effects of

slavery upon the master, and his family,

which the more faithful it was, the less

available to the system would be its retri-

bution. Such pictures are often false,

and mere caricatures; but you know enough

of slavery, gentlemen, to understand per-

fectly that it exerts many evil influences

upon the temper, the feelings, the charac-

ter of the master. The truth is, the tree is

corrupt, and therefore it bringeth forth evil

fruit. I know it has been said, that slave-

ry cultivates in the master an elevation of

mind, a high sense of honor, &c. So, it

has been said, does the aristocracy of the

old world. But do you believe it? It

would be very strange, indeed, if slavery

did not tend to develop in the master and

his children those sentiments so deep laid

in our depraved nature, which in their cul-

tivation make us lofty, errand, and

violent; and it is notorious, and you will

not think of denying it, that these things

belong more to Southern than to Northern

men. The finest specimens of courtesy and

elegant gentlemen are often found in the

masters of slaves; and so they are often

kind and gentle in their temper. But you

ever talk about a Hotspur of the North!

and who calls certain classes of the South

by any other name? Is it the climate, or

is the state of society resulting from slavery,

that makes the difference? And this will

account, in part, for the greater frequency

of quarrels, duels and other such elegances

of life, in slave than in free States: As to

the real love of liberty, do you think that

slavery is suited to engender it? I know,

while I have been instituting them, that

comparisons are odious, but allow me to

ask you whether there is a truer love of

liberty in Georgia or Carolina, than in New

Hampshire or Massachusetts? I think no

one who knows me will accuse me of being

"Yankeeified," but I remember that old

Faneuil was the cradle of liberty; and in

all the talk of Southern politicians in these

late days, about slavery, I have been unable

to discover any peculiar proof of attach-

ment to this Union in particular, or of the

love of liberty in general. But this must

suffice. I write with a haste which I re-

gret, but which other duties impose; and

this communication already exceeds the

limits which had been prescribed to it.—

There are many other lights in which

the moral aspect of slavery may be consid-

ered—and these now suggested may be more

largely dwelt upon, if we pursue this dis-

cussion. You are aware that a convention

of the friends of emancipation is to be held

next week. It has been very confidently

predicted that that body will see nothing

to justify the prosecution of this movement,

and will advise its friends to give it up.—

In that event, you will probably think it

unnecessary to occupy your columns with

a discussion proposing no special object.

I do not anticipate such advice from this

convention, but on the contrary I expect

such ground to be taken by that body as

will encourage the friends of emancipa-

tion, while, I trust, it will give as little

offence as possible to others. In that case,

you will no doubt be willing that the whole

subject should be discussed with the utmost

freedom in your columns. There are

many, far more capable of doing it justice,

than myself, and I will very cheerfully

re-sign my place in the Democrat to them.

But whenever the truth can do no better,

I shall be ready to do my best in its behalf.

I am, very respectfully,

WM. L. BRECKINRIDGE.

Louisville, April 20.

Some once more follow!

Our telegraphic dispatch in another col-

umn confirms the almost incredible report

that the French ministry have determined

to send an army for the purpose of restoring

the

